

# The Real Man

By  
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Illustrations by IRWIN MYERS

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CHAPTER V—Continued.

Smith heard him through, nodding understandingly when the tale was told.

"It's the old story of the big fish swallowing the little one, an old that there is no longer any saving touch of novelty in it," he commented. "I've seen something of that kind in your background, and you say you haven't any Belmonts or Morgans or Rockefellers in your company?"

"We have a bunch of rather badly scared-up ranch owners and local people, with Colonel Baldwin in command, and that's all. The colonel is a fighting man, all right, and he can shoot as straight as anybody, when you have shown him what to shoot at. But he is outclassed, like all the rest of us, when it comes to a game of financial freestone. And that is what we are up against, I'm afraid."

"There isn't the slightest doubt in the world about that," said the one who had been called in as an expert. "What I can't understand is why some of you didn't size the situation up long ago—before it got into its present desperate shape. You are at the beginning of the end now. They've caught you with an empty treasury, and these stock sales you speak of prove that they have already begun to swallow you by little. Timanyoni common—I suppose you haven't any preferred—at thirty-nine is an excellent gamble for any group of men who can see they are clear to buying the control. With an eager market for the water—and they can sell the water to you people, even if they don't put their own Escalante project through—the stock can be pushed to par and beyond, as it will be after you folks are all safely frozen out. More than that, they can charge you enough, for the water you've got to have, to finance the Escalante scheme and pay all the bills; and their investment, at the present market, will be only thirty-nine cents in the dollar. It's a neat little play."

Williams was by this time far past remembering that his adviser was a man with a possible alias and presumably a fugitive from justice.

"Can't something be done, Smith? You've had experience in these things; your talk shows it. Have we got to stand still and be shot to pieces?"

"The necessity remains to be demonstrated. But you will be shot to pieces, to a dead moral certainty, if you don't put somebody on deck with the necessary brains, and do it quickly," said Smith with frank bluntness.

"Hold on!" protested the engineer. "Every man in this trade. When I said that we had nobody but the neighbors and our friends in the company, I didn't mean to give the impression that they were either dolts or chuckleheads. As a matter of fact, we have a pretty level-headed bunch of men in Timanyoni Ditch—though I'll admit that some of them are nervous enough, just now, to want to get out on almost any terms. What I meant to say was that they don't happen to be up in all the crooks and turnings of the high-finance buccannery."

"I didn't mean to reflect upon Colonel Baldwin and his friends," rejoined the ex-cashier good-naturedly. "It is nothing especially discrediting to them that they are not up in all the



"Can't Something Be Done, Smith?"

tricks of a trade which is not theirs. The financing of a scheme like this has come to be a business by itself, Mr. Williams, and it is hardly to be expected that a group of inexperienced men could do it successfully."

The construction chief turned abruptly upon his cost-cutter.

"Keeping in mind what you said a few minutes ago about 'back numbers,' would it be climbing over the fence too far for me to ask if your experience has been such as would warrant you in tackling a job of this kind?"

"That is a fair question, and I can answer it straight," said the man un-

## JOHN SMITH HAS THE GOOD FORTUNE TO PLAY HERO TO A VERY PRETTY YOUNG LADY—HE IS OFFERED THE JOB OF FIGHTING ENEMIES OF COL. BALDWIN

Synopsis.—J. Montague Smith, cashier of the Lawrenceville Bank and Trust company, bachelor society leader engaged to marry Verda Richlander, heiress, is wrongfully accused of dishonesty by Watrous Dunham, his employer, and urged to be a scapegoat for the crooked accuser. Smith strikes Dunham, leaves him for dead and flees the state. He turns up a tramp some time later at an irrigation dam construction camp in the Rocky mountains and as John Smith gets a rough job. He soon attracts attention because of his secretive manner and his air of high class. The dam company is in financial straits, and Williams, superintendent, tells Smith his troubles.

der fire. "I've had the experience." "I thought so. If the colonel should ask you to, would you consider as a possibility the taking of the doctor's job on this sick project of ours?"

"No," was the brief rejoinder. "Why not?"

Smith looked away out of the one square window in the shack at the busy scene on the dam stamings. "Because I'm not exactly a born schemer, Mr. Williams. There are a number of reasons which are purely personal to me, and at least one which enters on your side of the pond. Your financial doctor, as you call him, would have to be trusted absolutely in the handling of the company's money and its negotiable securities. You could, and should, put him under a fairly heavy bond. I'll not go into it any deeper than to say that I can't give a bond."

Williams took his defeat, if it could be called a defeat, without further protest.

"I thought it might not be amiss to talk it over with you," he said. "You say it is impossible, and perhaps it is, but it won't do any harm for you to think it over, and if I were you, I shouldn't burn all the bridges behind me."

Smith went back to his work in the quarry with a troubled mind. The little heart-to-heart talk with Williams had been sharply depressing. It had shown him, as nothing else could, how limited for all the remainder of his life his chances must be. That he would be pursued, that descriptions and photographs of the ex-cashier of the Lawrenceville Bank and Trust company were already circulating from hand to hand among the paid man-catchers, he did not doubt for a moment. While he could remain as a workman unit in an isolated construction camp, there was some little hope that he might be overlooked. But to become the public character of Williams' suggestion in a peopled city was to run to meet his fate.

It is said that the flow of a mighty river may owe its most radical change in direction to the chance thrusting of a twig into the current at some critical instant in the rise or fall of the flood. To the reincarnated Smith, charting his course upon the conviction that his best chance of immunity lay in isolation and a careful avoidance of the peopled towns, came the diverting twig in this wise.

On the second morning following the unofficial talk with Bartley Williams in the iron-sheeted headquarters office at the dam, a delayed consignment of cement, steel and commissary supplies was due at the sidetrack a mile below the camp. Perkins, the timekeeper, called Smith from the quarry and gave him the invoices covering the shipment.

"I guess you'd better go down to the siding and check this stuff in, so that we'll know what we're getting," was his suggestion to the general utility man.

When the crookings of the tote-road let Smith get his first sight of the sidetrack, he saw that the train was already in. A few minutes sufficed for the checking. He sent the unloading gang back to camp with the teams, meaning to walk back himself after he should have seen the car of steel and the two cars of cement kicked in at the upper end of the sidetrack.

While he was waiting for the train to pull up and make the shift, he was commenting idly upon the clumsy layout of the temporary unloading yard, and wondering if Williams were responsible for it. The siding was on the outside of a curve and within a hundred yards of the river bank. There was scanty space for the unloading of material, and a good bit of what there was was taken up by the curving spur which led off from the siding to cross the river on a trestle, and by the wagon road itself, which came down a long hill on the south side of the railroad and made an abrupt turn to cross the main track and the siding fairly in the midst of things.

As the long train pulled up to clear the road crossing, Smith stepped back and stood between the two tracks. A moment later the cut was made, and the forward section of the train went on to set the three loaded cars out at the upper switch, leaving the rear half standing on the main line.

One of the men of the unloading gang, a leather-faced grade shoveler who had helped to build the Nevada Shore Line, had lagged behind the departing wagons to fill and light his pipe.

"Wouldn't that jar you up right good and hard for a way to run a railroad," he said to Smith, indicating the wholly deserted standing section of the freight with the burnt match-end. "Them fellows 've all gone off up ahead, a-leavin' this yer hind end without a sign of a man 'r a flag to take keer of it."

Smith was listening only with the outward ear to what the pipe-lighter was saying. Somewhere in the westward distances a thunderous rumour was drowning upon the windless air of the June morning. A big gray auto-

mobile, with the cut-out open, was topping the side-hill grade, and Smith recognized it at once. It was Colonel Dexter Baldwin's roadster, and it held a single occupant—namely, the young woman who was driving it.

Turning to look up the track, he saw that the three loaded cars had been set out, and the forward section of the train was now backing to make the coupling with the standing half. He hoped that the trainmen had seen the automobile, and that they would not attempt to make the coupling until after the gray car had crossed behind the caboose. But in the same breath he guessed, and guessed rightly, that they were too far around the curve to be able to see the wagon-road approach.

Smith saw the young woman check the speed for the abrupt turn at the bottom of the hill, saw the car take the turn in a skidding slide, heard the renewed roar of the motor as the throttle was opened for a run at the embankment grade. Then the unexpected dropped its loads. There was a jangling crash and the cars on the main track were set in motion. The trainmen had failed to make their coupling, and the rear half of the train was surging down upon the crossing.

Smith's shout, or the sight of the oncoming train, one of the two, or both, put the finishing touch on the young woman's nerves. There was still time in which to clear the train, but at the critical instant the young woman apparently changed her mind and tried to stop the big car short of the crossing. The effort was unsuccessful. When the stop was made, the front wheels of the roadster were precisely in the middle of the main track, and the motor was killed.

By this time Smith had thrown his coat away and was racing the backing train, with the ex-cashier-laborer a poor second a dozen yards to the rear. Having ridden in the roadster, Smith knew that it had no self-starter. "Jump!" he yelled. "Get out of the car!" and then his heart came into his mouth when he saw that she was struggling to free herself and couldn't; that she was entangled in some way behind the low-hung tiller wheel.

Smith was running fairly abreast of the caboose when he made this discovery, and the hundred feet of clearance had shrunk to fifty. In imagination he could already see the gray car overturned and crushed under the wheels of the train. In a flying spurt he gained a few yards on the advancing menace and hurled himself against the front of the stopped roadster. He did not attempt to crank the motor. There was time only for a mighty heave and shove to send the car backing down the slope of the crossing approach; for this and for the quick spring aside to save himself; and the thing was done.

### CHAPTER VI.

#### A Notice to Quit.

Once started and given its push, the gray roadster drifted backward from the railroad crossing and kept on until it came to rest in the sag at the turn in the road. Running to overtake it, Smith found that the young woman was still trying ineffectually to free herself. In releasing the clutch her dress had been caught, and Smith was glad enough to let the extricating of the caught skirt and the cranking of the engine serve for a breath-catching recovery.

When he stepped back to "tune" the spark the young woman had subsided into the mechanical seat and was retying her veil with fingers that were not any too steady. She was small but well-knit; her hair was a golden brown and there was a good deal of it; her eyes were set well apart, and in the bright morning sunlight they were a slaty gray—of the exact shade of the motor veil she was rearranging. Smith had a sudden conviction that he had seen the wide-set eyes before; also the straight little nose and the half-boyish mouth and chin, though where he had seen them the conviction could give no present hint.

"I sup-pup-suppose I ought to say something appropriate," she was beginning, half breathlessly, while Smith stood at the fender and grinned.

"You don't have to say anything. It's been a long time since I've had a chance to make such a bully grandstand play as this." And then: "You're Colonel Baldwin's daughter, aren't you?"

She nodded, saying: "How did you know?"

"I know the car. And you have your father's eyes."

She did not seem to take it amiss that he was making her eyes a basis for comparisons. She was her father's only son, as well as his only daughter, and she divided her time pretty evenly in trying to live up to both sets of requirements.

"You have introduced me; w-won't you introduce yourself?" she said, when a second crash of the shifting freight train spent itself and gave her an opening.

"I'm Smith," he told her; adding: "It's my real name."

Her laugh was an instant easing of tensions. "Oh, yes; you're Mr. Williams' assistant. I've heard Colonel-da—my father, speak of you."

"No," he denied in blunt honesty. "I'm not Williams' assistant; at least, the pay roll doesn't say so. Up at the camp they call me 'the Hobo.'"

The young woman had apparently regained whatever small fraction of self-possession the narrow escape had shocked aside.

"Are they never going to take that miserable train out of the way?" she exclaimed. "I've got to see Mr. Williams, and there isn't a minute to spare. Colonel-da—I mean my father, has gone up to Red Butte, and a little while ago they telephoned over to the ranch from the Brewster office to say that there was going to be some more trouble at the dam."

"You won't find Williams at the camp. He started out early this morning beyond Little creek, and said he wouldn't be back until some time tomorrow. Will you tell me what you're needing?"

"Oh!" she exclaimed, with a little gasp of disappointment. "I've simply got to find Mr. Williams—or somebody! Do you happen to know anything about the lawsuit troubles?"

"I know all about them; Williams has told me."

"Then I'll tell you what Mr. Martin telephoned. He said that three men were going to pretend to relocate a



Time Only for a Mighty Heave.

mining claim in the hills back of the dam, somewhere near the upper end of the reservoir lake—that-is-to-be. They're doing it so that they can get out an injunction, or whatever you call it, and then we'll have to buy them off, as the others have been bought off."

Smith was by this time entirely familiar with the maps and profiles and other records of the ditch company's lands and holdings.

"All the land within the limits of the flood level has been bought and paid for—some of it more than once, hasn't it?" he asked.

"Oh, yes; but that doesn't make any difference. These men will claim that their location was made long ago, and that they are just now getting ready to work it. It's often done in the case of mining claims."

"When is all this going to happen?" he inquired.

"It is already happening," she broke out impatiently. "Mr. Martin said the three men left town a little after daybreak and crossed on the Brewster bridge to go up on the other side of the Timanyoni."

The young woman had taken her place again behind the big tiller wheel and Smith calmly motioned her out of it.

"Take the other seat and let me get in here," he said; and when she had changed over, he swung in behind the wheel and put a foot on the clutch pedal.

"What are you going to do?" she asked.

"I'm going to take you on up to the camp, and then, if you'll lend me this car, I'll go and do what you hoped to persuade Williams to do—run these mining-claim jokers into the tall timber."

"But you can't!" she protested; "you can't do it alone! And, besides, they are on the other side of the river, and you can't get anywhere with the car. You'll have to go all the way back to Brewster to get across the river!"

It was just here that he stole another glance at the very-much-alive little face behind the motor veil; at the firm, round chin and the resolute slaty-gray eyes.

"I suppose I ought to take you to the camp," he said. "But you may go along with me, if you want to—and are not afraid."

She laughed in his face.

Smith shows his real character to Colonel Baldwin's daughter—something of the fierce brute nature that is alive in him. There's a real fight described in the next installment.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

#### Internal Heat of Planets.

The late Professor Lowell's discovery that Saturn does not rotate as one piece, but has "confoval regions, rotating faster within," suggests that some of the other large planets may have the same structure. As pointed out by Professor Very, the friction of layers of different velocities would generate heat, and thus retard the cooling down of the planets.—Scientific American.

## Temperance Notes

(Conducted by the National Woman's Christian Temperance Union.)

### WILL PROHIBIT HOT BREAD.

In the course of the debate on the bone-dry bill in the Georgia senate State Senator Pickett asked this question: "Will you say to the people that they won't be allowed to make hot bread because it hurts their digestion?" The Atlanta Constitution made reply in words which constitute a comprehensive indictment of the liquor traffic. "Yes, Senator Pickett," it said, "when the use of hot bread becomes so general and so abnormal as to constitute a mania; when craving for it becomes so great that men neglect their families and starve their wives and children in order to satisfy their appetites for it; when it is proved that men fill up on hot bread and go home and beat their wives and children in hot-bread frenzy; when rum runs nerve themselves with hot bread and under its influence kill our citizens and desecrate our homes; when hot bread violates the sanctity of our families and debauches our young sons and pure-minded daughters; when it lures itself with and inspires the lowest and vilest sorts of vice; when it befuddles the brains of our boys so that under its spells they sign checks and forge names and go to the penitentiary; when craving for it becomes so irresistible that workmen on Saturday nights cannot pass a bakery on the road home, but go in and squander the week's earnings in hot bread, when it should have been spent in coal, food for the family, shoes, life insurance; when society is taxed to provide policemen to guard men and women under the influence of hot bread; when the city and state are burdened to support courts to deal with crime committed as a direct result of over-indulgence in hot bread; when our penitentiaries and almshouses and insane asylums become filled with criminals and human derelicts and maniacs—human beings, once with souls, wrecked upon the rocks of hot bread; when mother's hairs are whitened by work through sleepless nights that fathers and sons spend courting in hot bread dives; when men can no longer find employment on a railroad or in an industrial pursuit if he uses hot bread; when engineers under the influence of hot bread fail to see the signal lights and wreck their trains and slaughter innocent people; when chauffeurs fill up on hot bread and drive their cars like madmen over our highways and streets, running down our women and children, the aged and the crippled, and killing them; when the use of hot bread shall mean such a pass that it threatens the very safety and sanity and life of the state—then, the patriotic, decency-loving people will demand that hot bread be prohibited."

Flattery catches silly people, but disserviceable under never catches anybody.

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